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23 May 1958

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Special Assistant to the Director
for Planning and Development

SUBJECT : Recommendations for Awards to Former CHALICE
Military Officers and Contract Employees

REFERENCE : A. Roster of Officers Released from CHALICE
as of 20 May 1958, attached

B. Pertinent Abstracts from AFR 900-7, as
Tab A, attached

1. After considerable thought on the matter, [redacted] and
I have come up with the following list of decorations proposed for
the two categories of personnel cited above. Subsequent to consider-
ation of this list, I shall attempt to propose another listing, covering
former enlisted personnel of CHALICE.

Legion of Merit

[redacted]

Distinguished Flying Cross

[redacted]

Commendation Ribbon

[redacted]

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2. In any evaluation of the foregoing recommendations, it is helpful to have access to the exact language of AFM 900-7, which is the regulation setting forth criteria for the awarding of decorations to members of the Air Force establishment. Abstracts from this regulation are included as Tab A to this paper. It is appropriate to note here in this context that quite a few decorations; Distinguished Service Cross, Silver Star, Bronze Star, can only be awarded for conspicuous behavior against an enemy in wartime. Others: Distinguished Flying Cross and Air Medal, must involve actual participation in aerial flight. One, the Soldier's Medal, is awarded only for conspicuous heroism and risk of life.

3. It is also significant to mention that in the case of the Legion of Merit, the language of the regulation states that: "Superior performance of normal duties will not alone justify an award of this decoration." I make this observation for the purpose of pointing out that it is my feeling that at the moment we have only two officers in the alumni ranks who qualify for this decoration. There is a considerable folklore, some of it containing elemental truth, to the effect that the Legion of Merit is "the Colonels' good conduct ribbon, and that since this is true, it is an insult to offer anything less to a unit commander in the field at the completion of his tour. I believe we should continue to regard the Legion of Merit as the highest award we in CHALICE can offer to anyone in the military, and to base its award on the highest criteria possible.

4. I understand from Colonel Geary that the mechanism for obtaining decorations for our former military and contract personnel (who have returned to the Air Force) is relatively simple. His office will prepare a request for the specific decoration in each case, to be accompanied by a classified citation which is very brief and non-informative. It merely states that the such-and-such medal is awarded to the individual for conspicuous performance of duties on a classified mission during the period from such-a-date to such-a-date. Colonel Geary then gets General O'Donnell to sign off on the proposal, and the machinery of the Personnel Services Division takes over to see that the awards are prepared and distributed.

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5. In all, forty-three officers were considered, including [] whose name does not appear on the list I have attached as Tab B. In addition, as we had decided earlier, the four contract pilots separated from CHALICE and now in the Air Force are recommended for the Distinguished Flying Cross. You will recall that this decision was predicated on such a contract pilot having performed one or more penetration overflights of the USSR during his tour. As an extension of this principle, we had said that if any pilot flew over denied territory other than the USSR, and had never overflown the Soviet Union, we would settle for an Air Medal. You will note that none of the pilots whose lives were lost in the U-2 are recommended for awards at this time. This is because at the time of their deaths they were not members of the military, and are hence ineligible for these awards. I should like to make a separate proposal to you about possible Agency awards for one or two of these cases, in due course.

6. If you feel that the recommendations as set forth herein are either open to question or require further discussion, or if there has been a conspicuous omission, I would welcome the opportunity to see you on the matter. Otherwise, your signature on the concurrence line provided is all that is required to set the wheels in motion.

SIGNED /
JAMES A. CUMMINGS, JR.
Director of Administration
DPS/DCI

Attachments:

1. Tab A
2. Tab B

CONCL: MAY 24 1958

(sgd) Richard M. Bissell, Jr.

RICHARD M. BISSELL, JR.
SA/PD/DCI

JAC/sb (23 May 58)

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SUMMARY OF AIR FORCE DECORATIONS

a. Distinguished Service Cross

The decoration is awarded to any person, who, while serving in any capacity with the Air Force, distinguishes himself by extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations against an armed enemy of the United States. The act of heroism performed must involve a risk of life so extraordinary as to set the person apart from his comrades.

b. Distinguished Service Medal

The medal is awarded to any person serving in any capacity with the Air Force who distinguishes himself by exceptionally meritorious service to the Government in a duty of great responsibility...In peacetime, it is a duty that involves the exercise of authority or judgment in matters of marked national or international significance. Superior performance of normal duties will not in itself justify an award of the medal. Civilians and foreign nationals are eligible for the Distinguished Service Medal only under exceptional circumstances.

c. Legion of Merit

The decoration is awarded to military personnel of the United States and friendly foreign nations who distinguish themselves by exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding service to the United States. In peacetime, awards to members of the Air Force are generally limited to recognizing services of marked national or international significance where the interests of the United States are involved; services which have aided the United States in furthering its national policies; or services which have furthered the interests of the security of the United States. Superior performance of normal duties will not alone justify an award of the decoration.

d. Distinguished Flying Cross

The decoration is awarded to any member of the Armed Forces of the United States or a friendly foreign nation who, while serving in any capacity with the Air Force, distinguishes himself by heroism or extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight. Both heroism and achievement must be entirely distinctive, involving operations that are not routine.

e. Soldier's Medal

The medal is awarded to any member of the Armed Forces of the United States...who, while serving in any capacity with the Air Force, distinguishes himself by heroism or extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight. Both heroism and achievement must be entirely distinctive, involving operations that are not routine.

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f. Air Medal

The medal is awarded to any person who, while serving in any capacity with the Air Force, distinguishes himself by meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight. It may be awarded to recognize single acts of merit or sustained operational activities against an armed enemy of the United States.

g. Commendation Ribbon

The decoration is awarded to members of the Armed Forces of the United States who, while serving in any capacity with the Air Force, distinguish themselves by meritorious service or meritorious achievement. The degree of merit need not be unique, but it must be distinctive. Acts of courage which do not meet the voluntary risk of life requirements for the Soldier's Medal may be considered for award of a Commendation Ribbon.

TAB A Attachment p.2
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